2: Lee T-5 (1855-1858) 1957
NO6 Comanche NO6

they believed, in truth, it was a living spirit in a silver body. 727

When I recounted all that had occurred since we last separated—my refusal to wind it—my obstinacy in resisting their commands, and my attack upon the Indian when unbound, he became still more convinced. The fact they had pursued such a course towards me, which they had not towards him, was perfect evidence in his mind they intended to naturalize me, and that, so long, at least, as the watch remained in order, I need not fear death at their hands. But he advised me, by all means, to pursue an entirely different course from that lately adopted; on the contrary, to leave no effort untried to initiate myself into their favor—to cultivate their good will—to yield submission in all things, and to deceive them, if possible, into the belief that I preferred to dwell with them rather than with my own people. By pursuing this course, he represented the time would come at last when their vigilance would relax, and an opportunity of escaping safely from them would occur. We conversed of many things, past, present, and to come, losing not a moment of the precious hour. At its close, he was ordered by the guard to leave. Charging me, if ever I escaped, to communicate the intelligence of his misfortunes to his friend, Antonio Ferandez, of Corpus Christi, he bade me a sorrowful *adieu*, and passed out of the tent. I have never seen or heard of him since.

Soon after this, early one morning, I discovered the squaws busily engaged taking down the tents. One after another the dingy white cones came down until the whole village looked as if some sudden tempest had laid it in ruins. Every canvas, buffalo mattress, and blanket was then rolled up, the cooking kettles and the tent poles collected, and all packed firmly on the backs of a crowd of mules collected in the square. It was a busy and laborious scene, 484 462 [492]

484 requiring much strength to elevate some of the packages
● 462 to their place, yet it was all performed by women.

462 The Comanche Indian in his village is the idlest, laziest being in existence, a sluggard and a glutton. His sole and only pursuits are war and hunting. His wife, besides attending to the domestic duties of the tent, plants his corn and reaps it, cultivates his tobacco, tans his buffalo hides—in fine, performs wholly, without the remotest aid from him, every particle and kind of labor, which, among civilized beings, devolves upon the husband. So now, while the women toiled and strained and lifted, the men moped stupidly around, smoking their pipes, or lolled upon the ground.

727 Everything in readiness, I was once more blindfolded,
484 mounted, and tied, when the entire town, not only its men,
492 women, and children, but its furniture, its tents, its public and private buildings, all moved off on the backs of mules and horses. There was not left one stone upon another of that city.

727 Fortunately, the mule upon which I rode was led, so that I escaped the annoyance that befell me, under similar circumstances, on a previous occasion. Being deprived of the use of my eyes on the journey, except when we encamped at night, I cannot give a description of the country over which we passed, further than to say we crossed over many mountains, and that it seemed to me a wild and barren
[805] region. At the end of three days, or three "sleeps," as a Comanche would express it, we reached the end of the journey. Here I found myself in a small village, of not more than twenty or thirty tents, inhabited by what appeared to be a portion of Big Wolf's tribe, on the bank of a considerable river that flowed to the southwest, and in a valley much larger than any I have before described.

2: Lee T-5 (1855-1858) 1957
NO6 Comanche NO6

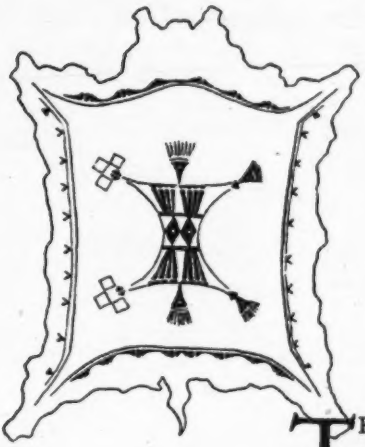
doubt whether there is a race on the face of the whole earth that equals the Comanches. They will lie along the sides of their horses, while under full speed, directing their course at the same time and discharging arrows from under their necks with deadly effect, in a manner astonishing to witness.

If a deer is captured, he brings it in on his horse, throws it to the women whose business is to dress and cook it. If he kills a mustang or a buffalo, he rides into the village and informs his squaw where the carcass may be found, who straightway mounts and goes out in search of it—skins it —cuts the flesh into strips, and returns.

While the men are thus indolent, the women are remarkable for their industry. Besides attending to the menial duties of the camp, working in the fields during the planting and harvesting seasons, they perform extraordinary labors in preparing buffalo hides and bringing them into the soft and pliant condition in which we see them. To do this properly requires about six weeks, and the process may be new to many of my readers.

When the hide is first brought in green, it is placed upon a log so hewed that it presents a flat surface, perhaps a foot in width. With an instrument similar to a common adze, the squaws cut away all the flesh and part of the bulkiest portions of the hide, until the whole presents a uniform thickness. This is a long and tedious operation. They are then stretched upon frames, and rubbed with a kind of pumice stone until the surface becomes furzy. If it should dry in this state, however, it would be hard, stiff and unpliant. To avoid this, they use a preparation composed of basswood bark pounded very fine and mixed with the brains of the deer or buffalo, which is applied day after day until the skin is thoroughly saturated, when it is soft and flexible.

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6



462

V

At Work and Play

THE material culture of the Comanches was relatively meager, the industries few and simple.

To the visitor uninitiated in ways of primitive tribal life, Comanche men might give the impression of being lazy and indolent. If meat was abundant and the men not concerned with war, raids, or ceremonies, they were likely to be found loafing in their lodges or idly working at some small task. Meanwhile their wives were occupied with domestic chores, attending to the children, and ministering to the needs of the men. Any supposition that the men were lazy, however, would be false, for in the life of the camp a division of labor between the sexes existed. If men labored less continuously than their wives, theirs were the more perilous occupations of hunting, raiding, and fighting. The wife's share in the life of the community was the care of the household; the husband was the provider. It was his duty to defend his wife and children and the tribe at large, and if the enemy were too strong to be defeated or repulsed, to hold them in check until the women and children might escape. All these activities were dangerous and hazardous. To fight at an advantage, the man must be light and active on his feet and unhampered by a load. Chiefly for this reason the men with their arms went ahead and the women followed behind, looking after the children, carrying the burdens, and attending to the animals which transported the camp equipment. Long after the need for such culture patterns ceased, it was not uncommon to see a woman walk out of a store carrying a heavy sack

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

of flour or other supplies while the man came out unencumbered. Moreover, in the way of home industry there was indeed little for the men to do. The Comanches did not work at such specifically masculine crafts as metallurgy and wood-carving. Pottery, basketry, and weaving were unknown.

It was the woman's business to prepare the food, clothing, and shelter, and to care for the children. She made the household articles and bags, brought the wood and water, attended to packing and unpacking on moving day, and helped with making the horse equipage. She followed closely behind the hunter with pack animal and knife, skinned the animals, packed the hides to camp, and by slow, tedious processes converted them into clothing, tipi covering, bags, and other articles.

Hides were prepared differently according to whether they were to be worked into leather or made into rawhide bags. Some skins were tanned on one side only, others on both. The process was not identical for buffalo and deer skins, leather might or might not be smoked, and there were variations due to individual technique in workmanship. White influence affected the implements and technique, so that full details concerning the historic process can no longer be recovered. The essentials of tanning, however, are clear enough. To remove the hair, the skin was soaked on the hair side with a mixture of wood ashes and water, which produces lye. Lime, which was obtained from burned rock, was sometimes used in place of ashes. After the hide was sufficiently soaked, the hair side was scraped against the grain. Some women chose to shave off the hair without previously soaking the hide.

There were various kinds of scrapers. A scraper might be an oval, flat flake of flint chipped down so as to have a rather sharp and even edge all around, and it varied in size, some scrapers being large enough to use in both hands. Buffalo bones were often employed, and after the appearance of the white man, metal scrapers became common. Whether or not the hair was removed, a long and tedious process was required to tan the hide. The essential operations were the preparation of the hide, the application of the tanning mixture, and the subsequent working of the hide to make it soft and pliable.

The green hide, according to the whim of the individual worker,

The Comanches

276 Comanche pipes were made of bone, stone, or wood by both men and women. Many of the early pipes were straight tubes made of bone from the shank of a deer or an antelope, cut off at either end, the marrow punched out, and the mouth end pared down and smoothed. Before being used, such a pipe was commonly wrapped with the ligament from the back of a buffalo bull's neck, and this, when dried, made so complete a reinforcement of the bone that the pipe might last a long time. The straight bone pipes were easier to carry than the more bulky and elaborate stemmed pipes, and were therefore taken on expeditions. They were both long and short, and [171] were called ɔ'mɔɪɔy. Such pipes were also used by the Kiowas and Cheyennes.[4]

276 324 According to white captives, the stone pipe was most commonly used in later times. Stone pipes were made of soft stone, either white soapstone or red sandstone. Soapstone is easy to fashion, is found in various sections of the Comanche country, and answers as well as clay or meerschaum. The Comanche stone pipe bowl was made with a vertical cylinder on a flat base that projected forward and back from the bowl. This spur beyond the bowl allowed the smoker to grip the bowl without burning his hands. He had to use a two-handed grip to keep the bowl from falling off the stem, since the two parts of the pipe were not fastened together. Soapstone bowls were usually dyed red or black with a preparation concocted of poke berry and grease or walnut juice. Hard wood was sometimes substituted for stone. Pipes were often artistically engraved and designed, particularly those intended for ceremonial use.

411 [462] The manufacturing of weapons and equipment for war and the hunt belonged primarily to the category of man's work. Perhaps the most important article was the bow and arrow. The Comanches made excellent bows, which they used with great skill. A good bow required a long time and much care and labor in construction. The [463] experts were usually the old men who could no longer go to war. According to informants, they had no organization or "guild." The [435] customary present or fee given for an ordinary wooden bow was one horse.[5]

[4] Informant: Post Oak Jim: see also Grinnell, *The Cheyenne Indians*, I, 208.
[5] Informant: Kills Something.

7: Richardson D-4 (no date) 1929
NO6 Comanche NO6

undertaking. Generally the men did the killing while the women dressed the carcasses, loaded the meat on pack animals, took it to camp, and cooked it for immediate use or dried it as the occasion demanded. Some women were also hunters of recognized prowess.[17] [462]

In seasons of plenty the squaws boned and split the meat, carved it into long chains, and threw it over poles to dry in the sun. Meat intended for immediate consumption was dried or cooked over a fire.

Naturally the Comanche women were adepts at tanning hides. The tanning of a deer skin is described thus:

> Having soaked the skins thoroughly, then throw them over a smooth log leaned against a tree at an angle, and then taking a rib of a deer in both hands, remove the hair by scraping it against the grain; they then stretched and dried them, when they became beautifully soft and white. To color them, they tied several into chimney shape, hung to a limb, and building smoulder fires under them they soon changed to a yellowish brown on the hair side, and light yellow on the flesh side.[18]

A somewhat different account is given by another observer. He states that:

> The skins were first staked down to the ground, flesh side up. With a sharp bone the squaw then scraped off every particle of flesh; next the scraped surface was spread with lime to absorb the grease, after which the surface was spread with the brains of the animal, rubbing it in and working it over till the skin became soft and pliable, the process requiring days and days of hard work.[19]

All authorities agree that the Comanches were unexcelled as horsemen. Catlin was amazed at their trick of dropping their body

17. In Notes Taken With Marcy, Parker tells of one woman, the widow of the Penateka chief, Santa Anna, who was said to have killed with her rifle as many as fifteen deer in one forenoon (pp. 192-193). Captain Marcy tells how he observed two young Comanche women of a northern band mount their horses and pursue and lasso each a young antelope which they brought back in triumph to the camp. Exploration of the Red River, 95.

18. Parker, Notes Taken with Marcy, 198-199.

19. Noah Smithwick, The Evolution of a State, Recollections of Old Texas Days, Compiled by his daughter, Nanna Smithwick Donaldson, Austin, Texas (not dated).

10:Horn T-3 (1836-1837) 1955
NO6 Comanche NO6

most abject slavery. It is impossible to conceive of 593
a more absolute despotism, than that under which 562
the wife is held by her husband in these savage
wilds. When they hunt the buffalo, she must carry
his gun, and whatever else is to be carried; when [224]
he shoots the buffalo, it would be infinitely beneath
his dignity to put his hand to it afterwards; she
has it to skin, to cut up the meat, and, whatever be
the distance, or the difficulties in the way, the poor
creature must carry the hide, meat, and all, to the
camp, and if it cannot be done at once, she must
go and return until it is done. At the camp, she has
to do all; to provide the fuel, to fetch the water, [462]
to dress the buffalo skins, to dig the grave, and
bury the dead. Her lordly master will seldom so
much as turn himself, to get a drink of water, or
to get his moccasins, or indeed anything he might
please to want. In all the above, he speaks, and is
instantly obeyed. Never, until I was shut up in the
horrible shades of pagan darkness, where the long
night of Nature holds her iron reign, did I see and
feel the indebtedness particularly of my sex to the
precepts of the gospel of Christ! (Would not the
publication of it to these poor heathen do them
some good? Would not its peaceful and equaliz-
ing precepts, help to raise these poor oppressed
females, could they be brought to bear upon their
cruel husbands?)

In their apparel, they differ little (as I should 291
suppose) from other tribes, unless it be in the

20: Wallace H-4,5 (1945) 1953 NO6 Comanche NO6

657 Quaker Agent Lawrie Tatum arrived on July 1, 1869, and
241 hoped to continue Hazen's humble but hopeful start. He offered an annual prize of five hundred dollars to be divided among the ten Indians producing the best crops. The Penatekas, who had learned something of farming through their contact with the whites in Texas and the agricultural tribes, raised some corn and vegetables. As for the other
[462] Comanches, it was a difficult beginning. The men, unaccustomed to such labor, left the work to the women. They could not plow a straight furrow. They were offended at the suggestion that they thin corn which they had taken the trouble to cultivate. After eating green watermelons and getting the "devil inside my belly," they had even less enthusiasm for farming.[18] Native culture patterns conflicted with the new.[19] Fifteen hundred acres were prepared for cultivation in 1870, but the results were almost as
[178] disappointing. It was apparent that the transition to an agricultural economy was to be a slow and painful process.

657 Colonel R. S. MacKenzie rightly believed it best to make
231 stockmen of the nomadic hunters he had subdued in 1874,
236 but he made a serious mistake when he chose sheep for them. He sold the horses which he had taken in his campaign against them in 1874, and with the proceeds purchased the next year 3,500 thoroughbred sheep and goats in New Mexico. These animals, he reasoned, would serve the triple purpose of supplying cash from the sale of wool and surplus animals, meat for food, and wool for blankets and clothing.

But MacKenzie had not taken all the factors into consideration. Many of the animals perished on the long drive to the reservation and others arrived in very poor condition. On issue day the Indians, dressed in their finest, gathered at the spot where Fort Sill Indian School now stands, and

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[113] 18. Agent Lawrie Tatum, Report, August 12, 1869, in Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, 1869, 985. Tatum to the Quaker Commissioner, July, 1870 (MS, Oklahoma Historical Society Library, correspondence files).

[821] 19. A statement by Chewing Elk, October 6, 1873, illustrates this point. "Mr. Tatum gave me a piece of land, but the first night I stopped there a big thunderstorm came right over the house [tipi]. I thought this was bad medicine and lit out and have never been there since." Quoted by W. S. Nye, Carbine and Lance, the Story of Old Fort Sill (Norman, 1937), 222; also see, Hunt, Annual Report, 1873, in Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Annual Report, 1873, 66.

21: Burnet T-5 (1818-1819) 1954 N06 Comanche N06
Texas

[ca. 1818]

perament of the climate they inhabit, would seem to preclude the existence of consumptive diseases amongst them. They have faith in certain preternatural charms, and think, or affect to think, the oil of the beaver rubbed on the surface of the body, an impenetrable barrier to a ball; and will relate with infinite self-complacency, how the Goch-chupin's (Spaniards) balls, have hit them here and there, and fallen harmless to the ground. This idea may possibly have some operation and impart a factitious boldness to their minds, when opposed to the *Scopete* or Spanish musket; but few will be found of sufficient hardihood to repose confidence in their magical shields, when assailed by the ball of a rifle. They have an indescribable dread of that potent and unerring weapon. They sometimes wear around the neck, one or more highly aromatic kernels, resembling the Vanilla bean, which they esteem as amulets of infallible efficacy in preventing disease; and they indulge many other and more frivolous whimsicalities that are not worthy of notice in a description so cursory as this.

The Comanchees admit of polygamy to an unlimited extent, and have no fixed ceremonials of marriage. Their principal warriors have often from five to eight or ten wives, being restrained only by their own capricious humours. Carno-san-tua, (The Son of America), a chief of some note, left 10 widows to bewail his untimely death. The most comely of them, however, were soon dispersed, to herd with the connubial slaves of other Lords of the creation; while the less favoured retained their weeds, and prolonged their severe and sanguinary discipline of lamentation for the dead. The redoubtable warrior generally proportions the number of his help-mates to his means of maintenance, which implies simply animal sustentation, and in procuring which, his only agency is the killing of game. His wives, one or more of whom are always in attendance on his hunting excursions, perform the duties of ostler in catching, saddling, and turning out his horse; of page, in carrying his implements of the chase; of butcher and porter, in skinning and transporting his meat; and of cook and waiter, in preparing and serving it up. The Squaws are

22: Dacus Q-3 (no date) 1960 · NO6 Comanche NO6
(ca. 1870)

BY J. A. DACUS

Popular author and member of the staff of the St. Louis Republican, 1871-80. Condensed from an article in Ware's Valley Monthly, Volume I, Number 1, St. Louis, May, 1875.

The Comanches: An Ethnological Sketch
(ca 1870)

THE COMANCHES number about fifteen thousand souls. Their former range extended from the sources of the Rio Brazos and Rio Colorado, of Texas, northward to the Canadian, and westward to the mountains of Colorado and New Mexico, and thence southward to the Rio Grande and the Mexican settlements of Nueva Leon and Coahuila. They are generally classed with the great nomadic Apache family. But the points of resemblance, I believe, are not sufficiently distinct to justify the classification. In form, feature, and language they have little likeness or affinity to the Apaches. Their traditions and symbolism and language, all point to a relationship with the Shoshones. The difference in the language spoken by these tribes is only dialectal. The separation must have taken place in the remote past. The cause which led to that separation, it is probable, will never be ascertained.

The name, Comanche, by which the people under consideration are distinguished, is not of their own bestowal. They call themselves *Neum*, which signifies men—the first, or original men. It is probable that their present name is a corruption of the Spanish word comenzar (pronounced comanthar), which signifies "to begin." The Comanches assert that they are THE *men*—the beginning men—or first men. In the effort to impart their distinctive claim, to strangers, they no doubt made use of signs signifying a commencement or beginning, and hence received from the early Spanish adventurers the title, *Los Pueblos Comenzar*: "The people to begin," or the beginning people. It was afterward corrupted to Comanche, instead of Comenzar.

The Comanches are nomads, but not pastoral. They have horses, but keep no cattle, or sheep. They not do cultivate the soil, and confess themselves ignorant of the simplest arts of agriculture. Their food is procured by the chase. The women sometimes collect a few roots and plants, and some of the indigenous fruits of the plains, such as plums, certain kinds of berries, and the fig-like fruits of a species of cactus found on the Wichita

22: Dacus Q-3 (no date) 1900 NO6 Comanche NO6
(ca. 1870)

[ca 1870]

Mountains. But these collections form a very small part of the food necessary to sustain life.

The animals killed in the chase are skinned, cut up, and brought to camp by the women, who follow the hunters for that purpose. The whole of the carcass is utilized. The entrails are regarded as appetizing morsels. They rarely use any condiment with their meat. When brought home, the women kindle fires and proceed to partly roast the choice pieces for their lords. The poorest pieces of flesh they may be permitted to reserve for themselves.

The Comanches are expert horsemen and skillful archers. The iron-tipped arrow impelled from a Comanche's *bois d'arc* bow, is a dangerous missile. They easily send it through an inch board; and I have seen the rib of an old bullock shattered by one of those arrows.

Among them, the women are the most abject slaves. The men do nothing, except to follow the chase, go on the war-path, or decorate themselves with feathers and paint. Even this last operation conducive to manly vanity, sometimes falls to the task of the female slaves of the lodge. The slaughtered animals on the plains are brought in by them; the skins are dressed by women, fuel is collected; the herds of ponies are watched; plumes are made, the paint bags are kept in order; the tents or lodges are erected; food is prepared; and, if after performing all these services the Comanche lady finds time heavy on her hands, she is made to minister to the pleasure of her sovereign lord by adorning his buckskin leggings with delicate splotches of paint, and graceful tufts of feather plucked from the prairie eagle; to streak his face with vermillion, yellow ochre, and charcoal, until he appears in all the glory of a full fledged dandy, and then he saunters forth to exhibit his charms to the susceptible maidens of his tribe. The wife, or the daughter, must, at least apparently, be delighted at the magnificent "make up" of the dandy husband or father. Theirs is not the privilege to complain.

Among the Comanches, all women occupy the position of slaves. The daughter is the slave to the father; the wife to the husband, and if there are any who do not occupy the relationship of daughter or wife, they are slaves to some male relative, or to the tribe. The father sells his daughter in marriage, and the husband may sell his wife for a pony, a shining piece of silver, or a handful of beads.

The women can form no ties, make no bargain, and exercise no choice in social or domestic relations. The father selects a husband for his daughter, exacts a consideration, if she proves agreeable to the chosen son-in-law, and consigns her to him, to do with her as he will. She becomes his slave,

23: Cabello y Robles G-3 (1778-1786) 1961
NO6 Comanche NO6
Eastern Comanche

(ca. 1786)

nor of Texas a number of questions about this tribe. A translation of Governor's Cabello's reply follows:

> Domingo Cabello: "Answerr that the Governor of the Province of Texas Gave to the Questions that the Señor Commandant-General of the Interior [Provinces] asked in a letter dated January 27, 1786, about various circumstances of the Eastern Comanche Indians," April 30, 1786, Bexar Archives.

FIRST: About Their Customs.

According to what is known about this Nation, it is the most brave and warlike of those [tribes] that inhabit the North; and when they have friendship they are very friendly and of a generous mood, and friends of their friends, although delicate in the mode with which they make friendship. They adore very much the skins of animals which they customarily bring with them, and which they fasten on themselves during the encounters of war, so that they will not be killed or wounded in any manner; and if any misfortune befall them, they attribute it to having given some offense to this specie of idol, such as not having offered it food or the smoke (*humo*) of tobacco each time they smoke (*fuman*), or that women have defiled the ceremonies which they make use of when they take the pipe in hand. Some devote themselves in this manner to adoring a buffalo hide, others to that of the bear, others to the otter, and others to that of some birds, whose skin, still with its feathers, they use to adorn themselves. Their marriages they celebrate with as many women as they are able to maintain; if someone distinguishes himself in bravery and in actions made against his enemies, or something of a similar nature, some fathers give him even of their daughters, and it is the custom many ttmes for him to marry with the sisters [of his wife]; husbands maintain their women with the buffalo and deer which they hunt; [the women] are obliged to work the meat and [prepare] the hides of the said animals. [The husbands] are so extremely jealous that for very trifling motives they kill their women; furthermore, when these mild ones give occasion for it, the husbands treat them with much blindness and harshness, as if they were slaves.

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

set of tepee poles, twenty-two in number, left from the old days. Now they were covered with canvas.

The government had built a small box house, generally fourteen by twenty-eight feet, at most family camps, but it could hardly accommodate the multiple-wife family, still in vogue. Mostly it was the camp's storage house, an out-of-the-weather place for saddles, harness, horse feed and medicine, and the women's sewing machine.

I almost never knew one of the Carlisle Comanches, man or boy, to take a job. There were riding jobs on the ranches, and many merchants would have been glad to hire a Comanche clerk. Old Indians with horse herds were forced to hire white broncobusters to break their horses. I asked an Indian father once, in my ignorance, why he was paying to have his horses ridden, and added the naïve qestion, "Don't your boys like to break horses to ride?" In our Scottish household I had never heard the words tact and diplomacy.

The old fellow gave a snort of disgust and replied, partly in sign language and partly in words, "They more like riding sitting-down-walking," that is to say, riding a bicycle.

The question had been crude on my part, and I should have been pulled up short for my brashness. But I was all excited, thinking what a wonderful lot of fun it would be to gentle and ride those ponies. I had actually helped do it on the farm with wild horses from Oregon. I knew there was a better way to break a horse to ride than to throw a saddle on a wild horse, climb on, and spur him until he was exhausted from bucking.

Just a little time spent gentling a horse pays big dividends. Let him wear a saddle while he is tied snugly to a post or in a stall. Then, when you first ride him do not use your spurs. We first taught a horse to lead while wearing a saddle. Then, the first few times we rode him we had someone on a strong, gentle horse keep the wild horse's head snubbed close to the other's saddle horn and lead him.

Indian boys had nothing but time. Tribal custom had been to require no menial tasks from boys as they grew up: "Pretty soon be warrior, may-be-so die." But in the old days, the boy was expected to work with the horses, herd them, learn to train them, and become an expert horseman. From my observations, the Carlisle boys were interested in horses only when they wanted to ride somewhere. Had they seen fit to gentle and break their fathers' horses, they would have had much more salable animals.

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) · 1974
NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

camp functioning properly. The tasks were varied and time-consuming, and no one woman could have taken care of all of them.

The warrior-husband was the killer of game, the procurer of buffalo meat, the Comanches' principal source of food. He had to have two sets of trained horses—one trained for war, the other for the killing of buffalo. In either pursuit, his life was largely dependent on the horse. He manufactured both his riding gear and his weapons, and he trained his own horses. His fighting was practically on a twelve-month basis, since, though the Comanches did not like winter fighting, most of the ambitious warriors made raiding expeditions into Old Mexico when the group went into winter camp.

The husband, therefore, could be of little or no help around the camp, and the labor had to be divided among the women. Usually one of the women was an expert horsewoman and had the responsibility of her husband's horse herd, which often numbered a hundred or more. When the fall hunt was on for the winter's supply of meat, the wives did the skinning and butchering. They dried the meat and made the pemmican. Also, they prepared and tanned the hides. After the tanning came the making of clothing. This included everything the family wore, both in summer and winter. Since there was neither needle nor thread, the holes in the leather were made with a stone awl or one made from bone, and sinew taken from along the backbone of a buffalo or deer was used for thread.

Other hides were converted into robes for bedding or into covers for the tepees. When camp was moved, tepees had to be taken down and fastened on travoises, like all the other camp gear, and then camp must be set up again at the new location. All of this was strictly woman's work.

Somewhere, sometime, during breathing spells from all these duties, the women bore babies, nursed them, and raised them to be good Comanches. And all this was in a society without a recognized medium of exchange, in which no one could hire anything done. The Comanches did, however, utilize slave labor. Successful warriors furnished captive women to their wives for helpers. These captive women were given the opportunity to trade their slave status for wifehood, and captive girls were carefully trained to become Comanche wives. Captive boys were trained as warriors to fill the vacancies in the warrior ranks. In addition to members of other tribes, Anglos, Spaniards, and Mexicans were abducted to be made slaves.

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
NO6 Comanche NO6
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slough and at some distance from the arbor. Brooms made from the native broom weeds tied tightly to a stick handle, brush end down, were used to sweep the arbor and cooking area scrupulously clean; and there were surprisingly few flies around the arbor. Generally shade was available, and the eating was done under the trees, away from the arbor. Wood, of course, was the fuel for the campfire.

When the time came for the really bad weather of fall, tents were pitched. Some families still had tepee poles and canvas covering for them. The buffalo-hide coverings had been gone for a long time when I arrived on the scene. The tents and tepees, together with the house, supplied the shelter needed in truly bad weather.

I have been in and around camps many times, and on occasion have even found it necessary to stay for the night. I watched the division of labor, seeking to find a clue as to who bossed whom. I never arrived at any satisfactory answers. Apparently the husband kept hands off, and the cooking area may have been out of bounds for him. At least, he stayed clear until the call for food. I never saw any of the women seek advice from the husband while the preparation of the meal was in progress.

There were exceptions, but at the home camp the husband usually corralled the horses and roped the ones to be used. Generally one of the women would come and help him harness or saddle up. Apparently the same wife helped with the horses each time. I was never aware of an order being given. When a family was in camp on the reservation for its Grass Money, the husband ordinarily cared for the horses.

At the home camp, one or two of the squaws would take a team and the wagon into the woods for the camp's wood supply. The squaws selected the down timber and chopped it into small enough pieces so that they could load it on the wagon to be hauled to camp. In one family group, this task was permanently assigned to a wife who had been so indiscreet as to give birth to a white baby. (The displeasure was not, however, visited upon the child. Not only was it treated just the same as the other children, but at times I was inclined to think it was actually the husband's favorite.)

I never saw anything to indicate that the first or oldest wife was necessarily the favorite one, nor was I able to tell which one of the women established the division of labor. A more trained observer than I might have secured more accurate information. In any event, of these things I am sure: there was a division of labor, and each wife

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
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went about her tasks cheerfully and willingly. Whichever one of the women divided the labor reserved enough for herself so that she was just as busy as the other women.

The little girls of the family stayed close to the women the day through, and performed tasks suitable for their ages. But the little boys roamed far and wide, never seeming to have any duties except when they were helping their father with the horses.

During group tasks there was always quite a bit of conversation and considerable laughing. In warm weather the women would go to the creek together, select a place in the shade where the water was about six or eight inches deep, and sit in the water on the sandy bottom to do the family wash. I never learned what the talk and laughter were about, as I was never able to accumulate a squaw vocabulary. (Comanche women held only the most necessary conversation with any man, Indian or white, other than their own menfolks. And while I was generally able to figure out the subject of the men's conversation and follow its progress, I seldom recognized a word used by the women when they conversed among themselves. At times I was inclined to think they even had a different language.)

The same air of camaraderie seemed to prevail whenever the wives were together in a group. I noticed it in the store whenever there was only one family present. Their trading done, the wives would draw their chairs into a group and converse. They never had chairs in their camps, but the women never passed up the several chairs we had in the store—although once in a while some quite old squaw would insist on sitting on the floor. If the chairs were all occupied, the women never hesitated to sit on the floor, and the people trading would walk around them.

Wherever you saw a man's wives—in town, on the reservation, or at a celebration—they always formed a group. You would not find one wife in a store and another out on the street. Two or more groups of wives would often chat together in the store or sit together in the shade on the reservation or at a powwow.

One custom which seemed odd to me was that of each wife's having her own sewing machine. The sewing done by the average family was not so extensive that one machine would not easily have sufficed. Yet each wife would have her own—something I had been alerted to look for by an article that had appeared in the *Star* commenting that each of Quanah Parker's wives had her individual sewing machine.

176 profusely with brass tacks in four bands near the base end, and two crosses spaced at equal distances of the length of the horn.

Comanche War Whistle Figure 27

Berlandier mentions the Comanche war leader's use of a whistle to blow commands to his followers while in action against the enemy.[10] One of these whistles, collected by Berlandier, is pictured in Figure 27. It is made from the ulna of an eagle and is 19.5 cm. in length. Open at both ends and with a triangular finger stop cut in one side, the whistle is provided with a cord of twisted rawhide for suspension from the leader's neck. While among the Comanche in 1883, shortly after the intertribal wars ended, Ten Kate was told of the former use of an eagle bone whistle to sound signals in battle.[11] George Bird Grinnell describes the Cheyenne use of a bone war whistle.[12] This was not an instrument peculiar to the Comanche.

Karankawa War Club Figure 28

A war club of the Karankawa Indians of the Gulf Coast is made from a single piece of ironwood (Ostrya sp.). The burl forms a head 10 cm. in diameter, and the projecting branch provides a handle 36 cm. in length. Although this club weighs but one pound, ironwood is an exceptionally hard and strong material. This must have made an effective weapon in close combat. The Indian who made this weapon must have shown considerable ingenuity in recognizing the potentiality of this abnormal tree growth as a war club. It is improbable that ironwood burls were typical Karankawa weapons, because they were uncommon in nature.

This club was obtained by John Varden, proprietor of the Washington Museum in the District of Columbia, while he was in New Orleans on a collecting trip in 1838. He recorded the specimen as a "War club of the Crank-a-War Indians of Texas" from a "George W. Chambers." Although Berlandier did not collect this piece, it is contemporaneous with the specimens in his collection. It may be the only war club that has been preserved from the Karankawa, whom Berlandier met in 1829, less than three decades before that tribe became extinct.

Comanche Painted Rawhide Case Plate 18

Women were the painters of geometric designs on parfleches and other rawhide cases among the Plains Indians. A fine example of Comanche women's painting on rawhide appears in Plate 18. This case is made from a single piece of rawhide folded twice to form the front, back, and triangular top flap of the case. When folded the case is nearly square—26 cm. high by 28 cm. wide. The case is laced tightly together at the sides with long narrow strips of rawhide, which also provide decorative fringes, some as long as 48 cm. This form of case was well known among the Blackfoot and neighboring tribes of the Upper Missouri as early as the 1830s and was used to hold sacred objects. The painted designs in green, red, and black on the front of

19. Page 71.
11. Ten Kate, 1885, p. 7.
12. Grinnell, 1962, vol. 1, p. 204.

[See p. 180-B--Analyst.]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 178]